

Note from the author

All of the events that this novel contains had happened in real life, for this is a novel that is based on a true story, but because of certain considerations, all the characters including some events, dialogues, and conversations were altered to fit the dramatic, suspenseful, and philosophical nature of this novel.

ONE

'I have just arrived in Paris. It is hideous here; it is loud, dirty, and the folks look unapproachable. It may have been a mistake to come here in the first place. Should I go back? Where is *back* anyway? Maybe it is better if I stay here. I am lost. Europe does not look as good as I thought it would. Nonetheless, *it* needs to be done.'

Joseph Rizk wrote that in his diary as he was sitting on a bench in front of Paris's train station. Joseph looked around him as he was writing, he examined his surroundings with great attention, even staring at the people who walked in front of him. It was warm in Paris, clear skies with not a single cloud in sight, but Joseph felt extremely warm, almost boiling, for, in addition to the suit he was wearing, he had a long overcoat on, which was completely unnecessary at that time of the year. He had to reach the Sorbonne, which was almost an hour away by foot, and so in a hurry, he threw his diary with its pen into his overcoat, grabbed his luggage and made his